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The Guitar Music of Villa-Lobos: Challenging Common Assumptions Regarding Idiomatic Fingerings, Shapes and Gestures as used in Selected Preludes and Etudes. A Lecture Demonstration by Dr Peter Argondizza

Heitor-Villa Lobos

Etude 12 from Douze Etudes

Recommended Recording: Timo Korhonen

Key of the Etude: A minor

Bar length: 107 bars

Predominant Left hand chord Shapes:

Form of the Etude: ABA

- Section A (*A minor*) Bars 1-38 with five distinct sub-divisions related to the techniques employed
- Section B- (*E Minor*) 39-69.
- Section A (*A minor*) 70-107 with five distinct divisions

Predominant techniques used in the etude

1. Glissando chords
2. Partial barres
3. Chromatic, octatonic, pentatonic scale patterns
4. Shifting up one string
5. Striking adjacent strings 'simultaneously' with one right hand finger
6. Rasqueado,
7. Second inversion minor chords.
8. Second inversion major chords.

Predominant harmonic language: Tonal with constant instability created by the second inversion profusion.

Predominant textures: block chords, drones, single line, glissandi, scales, and rasqueado.

Essentially in A minor, the etude follows the following harmonic plan whilst adhering to essentially the same right and left hand fingering through two-thirds of the piece:

SECTION A¹ BARS 1-11

Bars 1 and 2: Triple compound time. All chords are in second inversion unless otherwise noted {A^{mi}-C^{mi}6 (or C^{mi} with A pedal)- B^{mi}- A^{mi} and F^{maj} first inversion}. Pattern presented twice. Important deviation from the "A^{mi}" is the introduction of the 'pinkie' or left hand fourth finger on the last event thus presenting the important and contrasting F major harmony built on the sixth degree of the harmonic minor scale.

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Bars 3 and 4: In double compound time: {A^{mi}-C^{mi}6- B^{mi}7 / B^{mi}7-D^{mi}6₄-C^{#mi}6}

Bars 5, 6, 7: Simple quadruple time sets and prepares the modulation or shift in key centre by presenting a transition through various harmonies and implied keys:

{C^{#mi}/E^{mi} sus4 / D^{#mi}/F^{#mi}/F^{mi}}

{F^{mi}/G^{#mi}/G^{mi}/A^{mi}/G^{#mi}}

{G^{#mi}/G^{mi}/F^{#mi}/F^{mi}/G^{#mi}}

Bars 8-11: Return to the Triple compound time. Essentially a modulation to the *dominant minor – E minor*- with an A pedal retained: {E^{mi}/G^{mi}/F^{#mi}/E^{mi}/C^{maj}}- this harmony parallels the use of the pinkie to alter the chord shape to the harmony built on the sixth degree of the harmonic minor scale.

{E^{mi}/G^{#mi}/G^{mi}/F^{#mi}/F^{mi}/E^{mi}/C^{maj}}

{E^{mi}/G^{mi}/F^{#mi}/E^{mi}/C^{maj}}

{E^{mi}/G^{#mi}/G^{mi}/F^{#mi}/F^{mi}/E^{mi}/C^{maj}}

SECTION A² Bars 12-13 (Transition)

Here the texture changes- the first beat retains the sliding shape used to this point, {E^{mi} / G^{mi} then sequence starts on first string melody notes F / E^{mi} / D / C^{#mi} / B / shift to 7th chord on the a which presents a shift of accent to B⁷ / A^{#mi}7 / G^{#ma}7 / G⁶} This presents various alternatives for a shift in the metrical accent and potential syncopation. The harmonic realisation offered above would probably suggest an accent on the single note on the first string, displacing the accent to the following:

Bar 12 and 13 : 1²³ 2²³ 3²³ 1²³ 2²³ 3²³ 4²³

whilst a different harmonic interpretation may produce an inverted accent pattern. Shift to quadruple compound time in bar 13.

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SECTION A³ BARS 14-21

Modulation to *F major* (implied 6th degree of *A minor*)

Finger shape moves to strings 3,4,5 with open E pedal (All second inversion chords, but now major!)

{F/A^b/G/F} {F/B^b (A)/A^b/G (adds an open string 1 to the pedal or as an accent)}

{F/A^b/G/F} {F/B^b (A)/A^b/G (adds an open string 1 to the pedal or as an accent)}

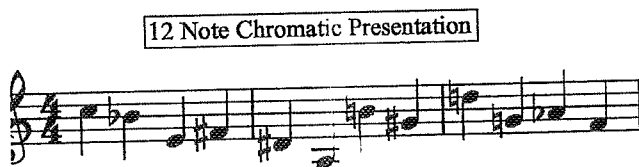
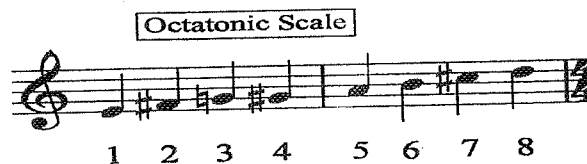
{F/A^b/G/F}

Move to duple time {F/A^b/G/ G/ B^b} {B^b/A/ C/B/D} {D/D^b/C/B/} (retains harmonic motion by minor third sequence)

Preparation the **dominant of the dominant** V/V. The cadenza section (a quasi-cadential 6/4 chord is implied in the E Bass.

Section A⁴- Cadenza

Left hand finger pattern 4-1-0, etc to 3-1-0



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Section A⁵

BARS 30-21- Modulation to *A major* (Parallel major of *A minor*) Finger shape moves to strings 2,3,4 with open a pedal (Again second inversion chords, but now *A major*)

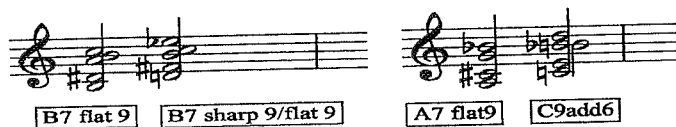
{A/C/B/A} {A/C/B/A} {A/D^b/C} Moves to fifth position A^{mi}7 followed by

pentatonic flourish in bar 32 leading to



Section A⁶

A New “fixed” chord shape which continues the “up a minor third sequence and back” but establishes the dominant and the Augmented sixth relation to tonicize “E” of section B (previously A has been tonicised)



B Section (bars 39-69): E pedal throughout 9/8 time. Right hind fingering pattern- any chosen fingering pattern involves any finger playing two notes at once. Bars 29-54

E Pedal Throughout

11

19

26

Elision

Elision

Elision

Altered dominant prepares return to a minor

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Characteristics of this section found in other works:

- ✓ Typically long melodic lines
- ✓ Typical use of elision
- ✓ Phrase 1 and 2 – e minor- ends on tonic
- ✓ Phrase 3- Implied move to key of A minor (iv of E minor and B (V of E minor)
- ✓ Phrase 4- C- B inflection- German sixth implied (used in etude 11 and prelude 1)

Further discussion: Phrase 5– e minor- ends on tonic

Phrase 6 – flat fifth of E minor- shortened phrases build tension toward the altered dominant accented cords in the last seven bars.

Return of SECTION A

SECTION A¹ BARS 70-80,

SECTION A² Bars 81-82 (Transition)

SECTION A³ BARS 83-90- Modulation to *F major*

SECTION A⁴ Bars 91-97- Cadenza

SECTION A⁵ BARS 99-21- NOT A Modulation to *A major* as before but a return to *A minor*

{A^{mi}-C^{mi6} (or C^{mi} with A pedal)- B^{mi}- A^{mi} and F^{maj}} first inversion. Pattern presented twice. Important deviation from the “a minor” is the introduction of the pinkie finger on the last event- presenting the F major harmony built on the sixth degree of the harmonic minor scale.

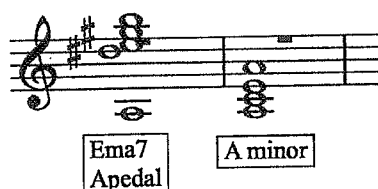
{A^{mi}-C^{mi6} - B^{mi}- A^{mi} and F^{maj} first inversion}.

{F^{maj} first inversion - C^{#mi} - E^{mi}- D^{#mi}-A^{mi}}

{F^{#mi}-E^{#mi} - G^{#mi} - G^{mi} - A^{mi}}.

{A^{mi}- G^{#mi} - Alternates implies a tonic dominant alternation}.

Rasqueado “glissando” fortissimo with the fixed chord shape resolves to *A minor*.



11

